233 reindeer are missing in their own herds. We tried to find out how
422 this was done, but even the Dolgan themselves could not explain it,
but only said that it was so simple because the eye "gets used to"
233 one's own reindeer. [Fig. 17] If a strange reindeer attaches himself
425 to a herd the owner of the herd passes the word along and supports
the reindeer until its owner is found.

233 It must be concluded that the custom of regarding reindeer as
261 private property did not arise so long ago--perhaps even after the
422 Russians came--which can be seen from the following: 1) in summer
the reindeer owned by a rich man are treated as a food supply for
the whole nomadic group in case of insufficiency of wild animals
and birds; in such cases the reindeer are killed without any com-
pensation for the owner; 2) the fact that it is only within the last
few decades that the reindeer has become an object of merchandise.
These questions are considered in greater detail in our work on the
Dolgan clan, and for this reason we shall not dwell on them here.

233 Up to the present time there has existed the custom of rich men
427 lending reindeer "gratis" to poor men, which cannot help leading
to cases of open or hidden exploitation. Usually in the autumn the
nearby poor men descend on a rich person and take reindeer from
him for their needs for a month, for two months, or until spring,
depending on the understanding; and if the borrowed reindeer is
killed by a wolf or dies of a disease, the poor man does not have
to make good the loss, but merely brings the hide from the rein-
deer's leg to the owner. An especially favorable environment for
exploitation is formed when reindeer are lent to a poor man to im-
port government loads: in this case the rich man gives the poor man
several extra reindeer in order that the poor man may import the
alloted load on them, and for this labor the latter is not repaid in
any way, but the money for transporting the goods goes to the owner
of the reindeer. The advantage of such an arrangement becomes
clear when one realizes that under this system the rich man does
not have to hire draymen at his own expense.

233 Besides the "gratis" dispensation of reindeer, there also exists ex-
432 change of reindeer, and--a later phenomenon--selling of reindeer.
437 In exchanging reindeer, A asks B for one of the latter's fine rein-
deer which A likes, offering in return a reindeer which is not equal
in value to B's reindeer, or even a reindeer which is no good at all;
as he does this, A says that later on B will obtain a good reindeer
from him on the same terms. The selling of reindeer is not a fre-
quent occurrence even nowadays among the Dolgan; they buy (that
is, in 1929-1931) a buck for twenty-five or thirty rubles cash, or for

233 one polar fox, or for reindeer meat, fat, and hides, according to
432 the agreement; the last case is met with very rarely.
437 The increase in the size of their herds leads rich men to resort to two applications of hired labor: 1) turning part of their herds over
233 to someone else to be looked after for the summer, and 2) hiring
464 herders.
465 [200] In the spring the rich reindeer breeder remains for the most part near the rivers, where he lives a more peaceful settled life
[857] fishing. For the duration of this period he sends his reindeer into the tundra, appointing as substitute master in place of himself one of his children--even though he may be a mere child--to be attached to the herders or to poor relatives, who, it goes without saying, receive nothing for their work. If there are no children or relatives, or if the latter are for some reason unwilling, a hired "master" is found. The family of the latter is provided with flour, tea, and tobacco until autumn, that is, until the return of the herd; to the man (the herder) alone is given half of a thick, dressed hide for the soles of his shoes and one chamois leather for his summer footgear. But he is also given a summer Siberian fur coat; sometimes this is already made, and sometimes he is told to kill such and such a reindeer and to use its hide for clothing. As pay such a hired master receives two or three reindeer for the summer's work. If a reindeer dies from disease or is killed by some wild animal during the pasturing time, the hired master is not held responsible, but is required to present the hide from the reindeer's body and legs to the owner, provided the reindeer did not die of some contagious disease.

In the fall the herd is driven home and handed over to the owner. Men who live in the same choom as the master are chosen to look after the herd in the winter. Usually such herdsmen are clanless bachelors or poor men who have added their few reindeer to the herd of the rich man, and who help out in the pasturing in return for this. The aforementioned persons do not receive any pay besides food and
[736] winter clothing. To a second category of herdsmen belong orphans who have been turned over to their relatives to be brought up, or the children of poor men who are considered the wards of society and who live with the rich man until they come of age. They are likewise supplied with clothing and food, and they receive one or two reindeer for their winter services, depending on the wishes of the master. And finally, there are special hired herdsmen in the proportion of two persons for each thousand reindeer. Under them there is supposed to be a woman subordinate, who is supposed to mend clothing, change the soles on footgear, dress and soften the hide for